

Washington, DC- Today, Congresswoman Linda T. Sánchez (CA-39) announced her support for Democratic legislation that would increase the minimum wage to \$7.25 an hour over two years. Sánchez signed a discharge petition that would bring this proposal (H.R. 2429) to the floor for a fair up-or-down vote, once a majority of the U.S. House of Representatives signs it.

In 2004, as a member of the Government Reform Committee and co-founder of the Congressional Labor and Working Families Caucus, Sánchez led an effort to commission a study to examine the real value of the minimum wage. The study found that there has been a massive 40 percent decline in the minimum wage since 1968 and overall it has declined by 15 percent since its last increase in 1997. Currently, the minimum wage is approaching an all-time 56-year low.

"Working families here in California desperately need a raise. With dramatic increases in the cost of living, especially health care, gas and housing, workers are forced to pay much more with less," said Sánchez. "A boost in the minimum wage will help over 441,000 workers in our state."

The Miller-Owens bill (H.R. 2429) will raise the minimum wage, which has remained at \$5.15 an hour for the past 7 years. Specifically, the bill would gradually increase the minimum wage by \$2.10 -- from \$5.15 to \$7.25 an hour over two years. The bill raises the minimum wage to \$5.85 60 days after enactment; to \$6.55 one year later; and to \$7.25 one year after that. More than 7 million workers nationally would see their paycheck grow thanks to a minimum wage increase.

"American families are having trouble making ends meet - in part because the minimum wage is at its lowest value in 17 years and Republicans have refused to increase it since 1997. People who work hard and play by the rules ought to be able to pay their bills and feed their children. This is an issue of basic fairness, of economic morality," Sánchez continued.

"While corporate profits are up, the wages of America's families are down. Together America can do better than an economy that favors the powerful and well-connected at the expense of American workers and their families," concluded Sánchez.